

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Board of Regents

**From:** Board Office

**Subject:** Reaccreditation of Baccalaureate and Master's Degree Programs  
in Business at the University of Northern Iowa

**Date:** May 8, 2000

**Recommended Actions:**

1. Receive the report on accreditation for the baccalaureate and master's degree programs in business at the University of Northern Iowa.
2. Inform the Board of subsequent reports and responses from the accrediting organization.

**Executive Summary:**

On March 3, 2000, the International Association for Management Education of the American Association of Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSB) reaccredited the baccalaureate and master's degree programs in business offered by the University of Northern Iowa. The programs passed all standards. The reaccreditation is for a period of 10 years, or into 2010.

A purpose of the peer view of this organization is to encourage continuous improvement of quality business programs. Consequently, although the visiting team report noted many areas of strength, it also found opportunities for improvement. Prior to the next review for reaccreditation, UNI is requested to provide AACSB with two reports addressing recommendations. The first update report is due July 1, 2001. The second interim report is due January 15, 2005. The contents of these reports, as well as a summary of current program strengths are noted below.

One method of measuring quality of academic programs is to have them accredited periodically by appropriate professional agencies. Such a practice is consistent with Key Result Area 1.0.0.0, Quality, of the Board of Regents' strategic plan. More specifically, it relates to Objective 1.1.0.0, "to improve the quality of existing and newly created educational programs," and Strategy 1.1.2.0, "to strengthen the quality of graduate and professional education at Regent institutions within the unique mission of each institution."

### **Background:**

The College of Business Administration (CBA) is one of six colleges at the University of Northern Iowa. The CBA has been accredited by the AACSB since 1993. The College has six undergraduate majors with a total enrollment of about 2,700 students, plus 110 Master of Business Administration students. At the time of the Self-Study, the College had 70 full-time faculty, 61 of whom were either tenured or on tenure track (with an FTE of 77.25). Fully 100% of the MBA program and 86% of the baccalaureate credit hours are delivered by the full-time faculty. Over 400 baccalaureate degrees were awarded in the self-evaluation year (430), as well as 27 master's degrees.

### **Program Strengths as Indicated by Site Visitors**

The visiting team and the AACSB commended the CBA in five areas:

- (1) a relatively new building that provides an excellent learning environment with state-of-the-art technology;
- (2) faculty commitment to the students;
- (3) involvement of the business community in curriculum and program development;
- (4) emphasis on experiential learning that enables students to enhance their classroom knowledge with their experiences in an external problem-solving environment; and
- (5) an external services unit that enhances the College's reputation and provides opportunities for faculty to dialogue with alumni and employers.

### **Areas to be Addressed in the Two Reviews**

In the July 1, 2001 report, the CBA is to address the following items (standards are indicated in parentheses):

- (1) Refinement of the educational objectives of each degree program so that achievement performance may be measured (M.3, C.2);
- (2) Development of a staffing plan to meet future needs (FD.2.c, S.1.b, FD.1, C.2);
- (3) Continued strengthening of the accounting faculty's intellectual contributions (IC.1, FD.3).

By January 15, 2005, an interim report is to address the following areas:

- (1) Enhanced career planning and placement services for non-accounting majors (S.2);
- (2) Formalized integration of the College's core courses (C.1.3.e);
- (3) Continued development and refinement of formal procedures for assessing specific learning outcomes for the business core and for each degree program with feedback to the faculty aimed at continuous quality improvement (IN.2, C.2);
- (4) Exploring new and creative ways to bring diversity of thought into the classroom (C.2);
- (5) Further enhancement of the College's development processes to increase student scholarships, improve student internship opportunities, provide faculty with opportunities to take faculty internships with area business firms, and increase support for faculty scholarships (IN.2, C.2, FD.3.a, FD.3.b, FD.3.c, FD.3.d).

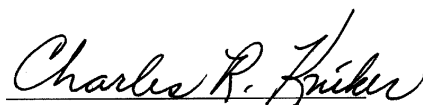
### **College Responses to Inquiries by the Site Visiting Team**

The Peer Review Team asked the CBA to respond to some concerns raised in the institutional self-study. These concerns included a perceived lack of student outcomes assessments, lack of diversity in the College's faculty and students, and scholarly productivity and involvement in professional activities by some faculty. These concerns were addressed in subsequent correspondence and at the time of the site visit by the CBA. Some changes have been made in student assessment procedures.

### **Analysis:**

The self-study by the College of Business was thorough. The concerns raised by the visiting team were addressed adequately by the institution prior to the site visit. The unanimous decision of the visiting team was that the CBA degree programs be reaccredited. A number of strengths were noted. While two reports are called for in the next few years, their purpose is not to address deficiencies, but to assist UNI in documenting the implementation of changes which will improve the programs.

A copy of the institutional self-study, the on-site visiting team report, relevant correspondence, and the letter granting reaccreditation are on file in the Board Office.

  
Charles R. Kniker

Approved:   
Frank J. Stork